



Washington State  
Board of Education



*Working to Raise Student Achievement Dramatically*

## **Board Selects Consultant to Begin Review of Science Standards** **First step to improve science achievement among Washington students**

**OLYMPIA (Wa)** – As part of the State Board of Education's (SBE) commitment to improving student achievement, the Board today announced the selection of David Heil and Associates to begin a statewide review of Washington's science standards. This is the first step to make recommendations for improving and creating world-class science standards in Washington.

"David Heil and Associates specialize in the development and evaluation of science-based educational programs, products and services," said Jeff Vincent, board member and chair of the Science Committee. "The firm will bring a leadership team that includes several prominent authorities on state, national and international science standards."

The consultant team will include, David Heil, one-time host of the Emmy Award-winning PBS family science program *Newton's Apple*; Rodger Bybee, Director Emeritus of the Biological Science Curriculum Study; and Harold Pratt, a private consultant and former Disciplinary Literacy Fellow in Science at the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

"The State Board members are very excited about the scientific talent and qualifications the firm will bring to our science standards review," Vincent said. "The firm was selected following an open, competitive process."

SBE also will appoint an advisory panel whose 16 members have diverse interests and experience in science education. Panel members will provide formal feedback and guidance to the external consultant as the review progresses. The panel will consist of teachers, administrators, educators, parents and members from the business community. For more information on the panel, or to submit an application, visit [www.sbe.wa.gov](http://www.sbe.wa.gov). The deadline for applicants is Oct. 21.

The statewide review will examine and make recommendations to improve the state's science standards by providing greater clarity about what is expected of students in each grade and more explicit guidance to educators about what to teach when to ensure more Washington students succeed.

"The Board feels a deep sense of urgency to help *all* Washington students attain a 21<sup>st</sup> century education," said Kathe Taylor, SBE policy director and project manager.

"Improving student achievement is one of the most pressing issues facing our state today and our efforts to improve science standards are laying the foundation to give students the skills they need to be successful in work, college and in life."

The consultant and advisory panel will work for the next several months, with the Board receiving an interim report from David Heil and Associates in March 2008. The Board expects to take public comment from across the state in April and receive a final report in May. Recommendations on changes needed to state science standards will be provided to OSPI after the Board meeting by June 30, 2008.

For more information about the State Board of Education, visit [www.sbe.wa.gov](http://www.sbe.wa.gov).

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